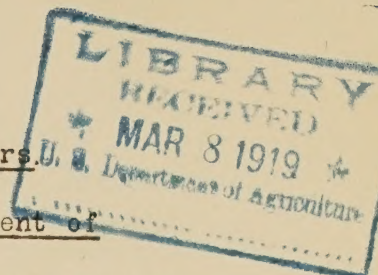


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The U. S. Government Exhibits and the State Fairs.



By F. Lamson-Scribner, Expert on Exhibits, Department of

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Read at the Chicago Meetings February 1919.

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It is now a matter of record how in July, 1917, the members of the American Association of Fairs and Expositions came to Washington to offer to cooperate with the Federal Departments in making throughout the country a general display of war exhibits, placing at the disposal of the Government, all the facilities of their grounds and buildings for this purpose. It was then too late to undertake a combined Government exhibit in 1917. It is a matter of record, however, that during the winter and spring months in 1918, a Joint Committee on Government Exhibits was formed, consisting of representatives of the War, Navy, Commerce, Agriculture Departments and other branches of the Federal service and that plans were worked out for an extensive series of war exhibitions which were made in cooperation with the Fair Associations during the summer and fall months of last year.

We are now prepared to make a statement of the cost of our 1918 exhibit campaign and give consideration to the work of the coming season and the possibilities of again cooperating with the big fair and exposition organizations of this country, not for the purpose of stimulating war activities but to encourage and direct the people in the arts of peace.

THE FAIR FUND OF 1918.

At the December meeting of the Association of Fairs and Expositions, I was unable to present a complete statement of the expenditures of the Fair's fund last season. But such a statement is now possible and I am pleased to be able to present it at this time, hoping it may not be too late to incorporate it in the annual proceedings of the Association. (Copy of this statement attached).

Briefly, I may say that the 39 fairs and expositions in the six circuits

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

It is the duty of the Secretary of the Interior to report to the President and the Senate the condition of the public lands and the progress of the work of the Department during the year. This report is prepared for the President and the Senate, and is also made available to the public. The report contains a summary of the work of the Department, and a detailed account of the progress of the work of the various bureaus. It also contains a list of the public lands, and a description of the various resources of the public lands. The report is a valuable source of information for the public, and is an important document in the history of the Department.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

The Department of the Interior is responsible for the management of the public lands, and for the protection of the natural resources of the United States. It is also responsible for the regulation of the various industries that depend on the public lands, and for the promotion of the general welfare of the people. The Department is organized into several bureaus, each of which is responsible for a specific function. The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the management of the public lands, and for the protection of the natural resources. The Bureau of Reclamation is responsible for the regulation of the various industries that depend on the public lands, and for the promotion of the general welfare of the people. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for the management of the Indian lands, and for the protection of the Indian people. The Bureau of Geographical Names is responsible for the regulation of the various industries that depend on the public lands, and for the promotion of the general welfare of the people.

conducted last year, deposited with the Disbursing officer of the Agricultural Department, \$38,847.00. Only \$18,405.13 of this deposit was expended. The unexpended balance, or \$20,441.87 has now been returned, each fair or exposition in a circuit receiving a like amount, according to the original plan of prorating expenses. Six of the fairs were called off on account of the epidemic of influenza, and to these the full amount of their deposits was returned. This refund did not arise through any over-estimate of the expenses, upon which estimate the deposits were made, but is the result of a clear saving to the fairs through the economical handling of the funds. The greater part of this saving was due to the liberal concessions secured from the Railroad Administration, giving free return on all the exhibits from their last point of display to Washington, D. C. or to Alexandria, Va. In some instances, this was a large item. For example, in circuit five, the return from Los Angeles, a distance of 2950 miles, would have cost \$1920. There was a further saving through being relieved of all demurrage charges on the freight cars at stop-over points. In this connection it is interesting to note that in one case where movement by baggage car on a passenger train was secured in order to make connections with the fair dates, a courtesy from the railroad which was shown in more than one instance, the freight cars which had carried the exhibits, were forwarded at the same time and held in readiness for the next shipment. Our original estimates, of course, were based upon the payment of these return shipments, demurrage and other possible charges.

EXPENSE TO THE GOVERNMENT.

The cost to the Government of participation in the fairs and expositions last season was approximately \$20,000, making the total cost of the entire project, including the Fair's fund, \$38,405.13. In round numbers, the expense of making exhibitions at the 33 fairs was \$40,000, the unit of cost being approximately, \$1,211.

Of course, this does not include the cost of the preparation of the exhibits themselves. These had been made and were prepared for shipment and merely had to be assembled and transported. The distance these exhibits traveled during the season was more than 23,000 miles by railroad and they were displayed at 33 fairs, covering altogether an area of 264,000 square feet. The Government has repeatedly made appropriations of \$20,000 for the participation in expositions by the Agricultural Department alone occupying no more space than was filled at any one of the fairs last year by the Joint Government exhibits, and at very little more than 1/20 of the cost.

From these statements it is evident that the plans carried out last year were economical, both to the Government and to the Fair Associations. The officials of the latter have unanimously expressed approval of the displays made and nearly all have expressed the wish that a similar program of cooperating with the fairs be carried out the coming season.

PLANS FOR THE SEASON OF 1919.

At the present time we do not know what appropriation will be available for our fair and exposition work the coming season. The Appropriation Bill for the Agricultural Department for the next Fiscal year is now pending in Congress and as it passed the House, no provision was made for the preparation or handling of exhibits. There is evidently a popular demand for the Government exhibits and the expressions of commendation from the various fair officials where our displays were made last year, have been most gratifying. In fact, I am still congratulating myself upon the success of our undertaking last year, and am filled with appreciation of the cordial assistance and close cooperation of all those associated in the work from the members of the Joint Committee on Government Exhibits and the Fair Officials, to the laborers employed in the actual work of packing and shipping our exhibit material. There was a unity of action which

made success possible, but even now it seems wonderful to me that we were able, during the brief exposition period of hardly more than three months, to take part in 33 of the larger fairs and expositions of the country at points scattered from New England to California and South to Florida and Texas, and all without a mishap of any kind; nothing broken, nothing lost and all of our men returned to Washington in the best of condition and now ready for another campaign.

Just what we will be able to do this year depends upon the liberality of Congress in the matter. The Secretary of Agriculture appreciates the value and importance of the exhibit work and has already raised the question with the heads of other Departments as to whether or not they cared to join in combined exhibits for the summer and fall fairs of 1919. Replies favoring such a project have been received from the War, Navy, and Commerce Departments. These Departments, in response to the invitation of the Secretary of Agriculture, have also named representatives to serve on the Joint Committee on Government Exhibits, and there is good reason to believe that other Departments will join in our cooperative plan.

I do not know what monies other departments may have for carrying on exposition work, or if they have any funds which they can use for this purpose. The money available in the Department of Agriculture at the present time will be used in preparing for the coming season's work, but this fund will be exhausted, or will not be available after June 30.

It should be stated here that this fund consists in part of an allotment made by the Secretary of Agriculture from the special appropriation for stimulating agriculture under war conditions and, in part, from an increment of appropriations made upon the initiative of members of Congress. In the bill now pending before the Congress, the Secretary makes no recommendations for exhibit funds beyond the salaries of the staff of the Office of Exhibits. It is the view of the Depart-

ment that any expenditure for a joint government exhibit, or any expenditures beyond the specific functions of the Department of Agriculture itself, should be initiated by the Congress.

We will assume that some provision will be made for carrying out a program of exhibitions similar to that of last year. We will proceed to study the dates of the fairs and the railroad time-tables and the routes from one point to another and work out to the best of our ability at least five circuits, and if we can find men to handle them and sufficient material for exhibits, eight circuits may be arranged in order that the largest number possible may have a chance to see and become familiar with the work the Government is doing at the nation's capital. I have recommended, and the Secretary has approved the idea, that while we maintain for a number of the circuits the "two-carload" exhibits, we have also circuits of "one-carload" to meet the conditions and circumstances of the smaller fairs, which are no less deserving of Government attention than the larger ones, but which may not have the means for handling displays occupying 8000 to 10,000 square feet of floor space, the area filled by our "two-carload" exhibits last year. I can visualize a very attractive and highly educational exhibit which shall not occupy more than 3000 square feet, and an exhibit of this extent will meet all the requirements of many of the smaller fairs.

SPACE.

The Government always expects to have the space it occupies at a fair free of cost. It also expects a location which shall be prominent and which will be easy of access to visitors. In setting aside 8000 to 10,000 square feet of desirable space for the use of the Government, the Fair officials are doing a generous act, for such space usually would be that which commands the highest price from commercial exhibitors. Many fairs are not so situated that they can afford to give up space to this extent and those that cannot, should state frankly their position.

and ask for only what can be well taken care of. We hope to be able to have an advance agent inspect the space assigned to the Government exhibits at the fairs before sending them out. If the space and other local conditions be acceptable, these advance agents will be authorized to make all arrangements for having the space put in proper condition for placing the exhibits, engaging necessary labor for unloading and installing them, drayage for thier movement to and from the cars, booking hotel accomodations for the attendants, etc. etc. The arrangement in advance for the truck service required to move our exhibits from the cars to the exposition buildings and returning the same, is very necessary in order to prevent delays in the movement of exhibits from point to point.

While we are hoping to be able to secure the same advantageous afrangements with the Railroad Administration given us last year, we will not attempt to make the same rapid moves from fair to fair. In some instances, the period between the close of one fair to the opening of another was less than forty-eight hours and the distance between the two was a couple of hundred miles or more. In view of the character of Government exhibits our itineraries should be so arranged that there shall be at least four days between the closing of one fair and the opening of the next. A longer period would be even more satisfactory. Hasty packing often results in injury and loss to the exhibits and there should be sufficient time in making the installation to repair or touch up exhibits which have become in any way injured.

MOTION PICTURES.

The experience of last year makes the question of combining the motion picture display with the Government exhibits a doubtful one. The Agricultural Department and some of the other executive branches of the Government are provided with excellent moving picture films and there are, I believe, a number of projecting machines belonging to the Department.

My personal view is that we should not undertake to make motion picture displays except upon the specific request of the Fair Association which will agree, at the same time, to provide the motion picture operator and all the essentials necessary, excepting the films and possibly the projecting apparatus, when the latter can be furnished by the Government.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE LOAN OF THE GOVERNMENT EXHIBITS MAY BE MADE IN 1919.

As matters now stand, in order to secure the loan of the Government exhibits, it will be necessary for the Fair officials to pay all charges connected with their movement and give bond to insure their safe return to the Department, or to such point as the Department may designate, without cost to the Government, other than that of the salaries of the attendants accompanying the exhibits.

The Fair Associations or properly authorized officials, must agree to pay all drayage, freight and express charges incident to handling and shipping the exhibits; cost of all labor and material required in the installation of the exhibits and which shall be furnished upon request of the Government official in charge; supply, free of all cost, suitable space necessary for displaying the exhibits and space for the storage of the packing or shipping boxes during the period of the fair or exposition; furnish and pay all charges for water supply and for electric current necessary for lighting or operating the exhibits; pay the traveling expenses, including street car and taxi fares, and subsistence allowance, amount to be designated by the Secretary, of such attendants as the Secretary may deem necessary to accompany and demonstrate the exhibits, from the time said attendants leave Washington, D. C. until their return thereto or to other designated points.

An estimate of these expenses shall be made in each case and a deposit to the amount of said estimate shall be made in advance by the Fair Association to the Disbursing officer of the Department of Agriculture, who shall pay the expenses herein noted as they occur, upon presentation of duly executed vouchers, approved by

the Expert on Exhibits.

The plan of prorating the expense of each circuit among the fairs in that circuit, as carried out last year, has proven generally satisfactory and will be recommended for adoption the coming season, if similar conditions prevail.

In event of the Fair officials failing to furnish the labor and supplies necessary to the installation and proper movement of the exhibits after formal request has been made, the official in charge of the Government's exhibit may secure the necessary labor and supplies charging the expense of the same to the sum deposited by the Fair Association.

The Government reserves the right to withdraw its exhibits from fairs or expositions at any time should the Fair officials fail to fulfill their contract and agreement or should any features of the fair be objectionable in character.

In event of withdrawal from any cause, the Fair Association will be required to pay from the sum deposited, all actual cost incurred in connection with said Fair or Exposition.

The fairs desiring the loan of the Government exhibits will make, through their Secretaries or other authorized agents, formal requests for the same and express unqualified acceptance of the conditions imposed as herein set forth, on or before May 1, 1919, and, in order to definitely plan and complete arrangements for the itineraries of the several circuits that may enter into the program of the coming season, each fair accepting the loan of the Government exhibits will make the deposit, based upon the Department's estimates as noted herein, by certified check on or before June 15, 1919.

It is the desire of the Government to cooperate with the fairs and expositions in their displays to the full extent of the facilities and materials available, but no assurances can be given of favorable consideration of any requests or applications for exhibits for this season's displays after June 15, 1919.

It is understood by all concerned that the distances between the fairs and conflict in the dates when severally held, may make it impossible to include them in all the circuits which are found to be practicable.

CONCLUSION

The work of the Joint Committee on Government Exhibits for 1918 is now finished. The results of that work have received your favorable and kindly comment expressed in many letters from the secretaries of your fairs, addressed to the Chairman of the Joint Committee.* Similar recognition of the Committee's endeavors has come from Senators and members of Congress, some expressing the hope that the Government exhibitions might become a permanent feature of the fairs.

"I sincerely trust that the pleasant relations between the Joint Committee on Government Exhibits and the State Fairs will be perpetuated and that the Government will continue to exhibit at State Fairs."

E. G. Bylander, Sec. Missouri State Fair, Sedalia
Dec. 13, 1918.

"I desire to congratulate you upon the fine manner in which the many details were worked out in arranging for the Government Exhibits, which I have had the pleasure of inspecting at the Iowa State Fair."

I. S. Mahan, Secretary-Manager, Oklahoma State Fair &
Exposition.
Sept. 19, 1918.

"We assure you of our appreciation of what you have done for the state fairs this year. Your exhibit certainly was a very worthy one and the interest shown by the visitors at our fairs proves the theory that your departments can get nearer the people thru our fairs and expositions than in any other way and that they reach the class of people most interested in your work."

E. V. Walborn, Mgr. Ohio State Fair, Columbus, Ohio.
Dec. 11, 1918.

"We hope that the Government will make the matter of exhibiting at our Fair, and other State Fairs, an annual occurrence. But very few of the people of Kansas can go to Washington, but a quarter of million of them can come to Topeka each year to see the Government Exhibit."

Phil Eastman, Sec'y., Kansas Free Fair, Topeka, Kans.
to
Congressman E. Little.
Oct. 1, 1918.

"At the request of the people of my State, I beg to convey to you their appreciation of the value of the Government exhibit which was recently sent to the Wyoming State Fair at Douglas. The hope is now expressed that this policy of sending exhibits to the various State Fairs will be permanently adopted by the Government."

John B. Kendrick, (U.S.S.)

Oct. 8, 1918.

"I sincerely hope that this plan of permitting Government exhibits at the State Fairs and Expositions may be continued, as I believe thoroughly in the stimulation of public interest along such lines."

F. E. Warren, (U.S.S.)

Oct. 8, 1918.

The continuance of a Joint Committee on Government Exhibits for the coming season is now assured. What this Committee will be able to do in the way of assembling and displaying a combined Government exhibit, depends upon the extent of your cooperation and the consideration given the matter by the Congress. Personally, I feel that the success of our efforts last year and wide spread interest manifested in our exhibitions, fully justifies a continuance of Government support. Everyone understands the present financial situation of the Government demands that all work requiring expenditures of public funds should be given most careful consideration before being undertaken, but I am convinced that the stimulus which displays of well selected exhibits will give to our Agricultural industries and to our foreign and domestic Commerce, will alone justify the Congress in providing the funds necessary to carry on our exposition work in a way that shall be creditable to the Government, satisfactory to your Fair Associations and in a manner that will inspire feelings of more intense loyalty and greater patriotism in the millions of people who annually visit your fairs.

